RENTAL MARKET REPORT

Alberta Highlights

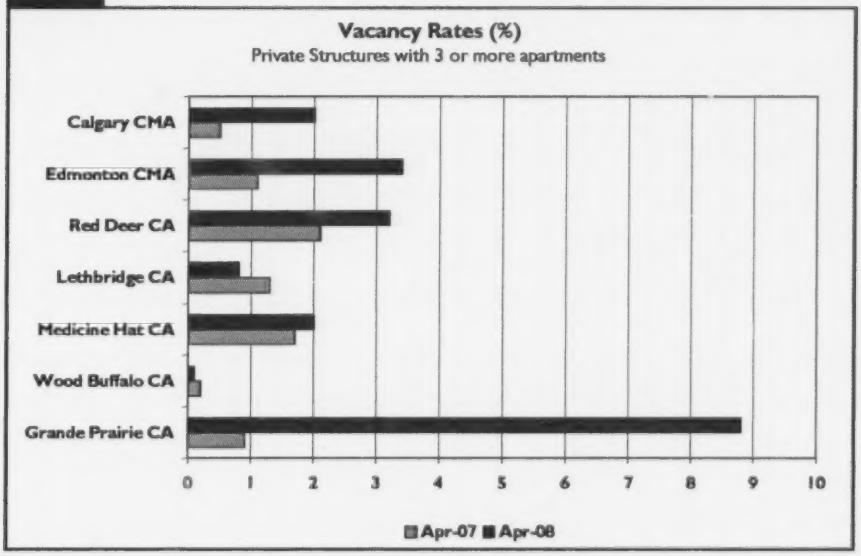
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Date Released: Spring 2008

Highlights

- The average apartment vacancy rate in Alberta's urban centres increased from 0.9 per cent in April 2007 to 2.9 per cent in April 2008.
- The 2008 vacancy rates ranged from a low of zero per cent in Canmore and Okotoks to a high of 8.8 per cent in Grande Prairie.
- Calgary and Edmonton, the two largest urban centres, reported vacancy rates of 2.0 and 3.4 per cent, respectively.
- The provincial average rent for all unit types was $953 per month. At $2,193, Wood Buffalo had the highest average monthly rent amongst all urban centres in the country.

Figure 1



According to the results of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's Spring Rental Market Survey, the vacancy rate in privately-initiated rental apartments in Alberta's centres with a population of 10,000 or more increased from 0.9 per cent in April 2007 to 2.9 per cent in April 2008.

The number of urban centres covered in this year's survey increased to 17 versus 13 in 2007. The survey now includes the Census Agglomerations (CAs) of High River, Lacombe, Strathmore, and Sylvan Lake. According to Statistics Canada's 2006 census, the population of these four areas now exceeds 10,000. Despite the addition of these centres, nearly 97 per cent of the rental apartment units in the survey were in the seven largest urban markets. The Edmonton Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) had the largest rental apartment universe followed by the Calgary CMA.

The average apartment vacancy rate in Edmonton increased from 1.1 per cent in April 2007 to 3.4

Canada

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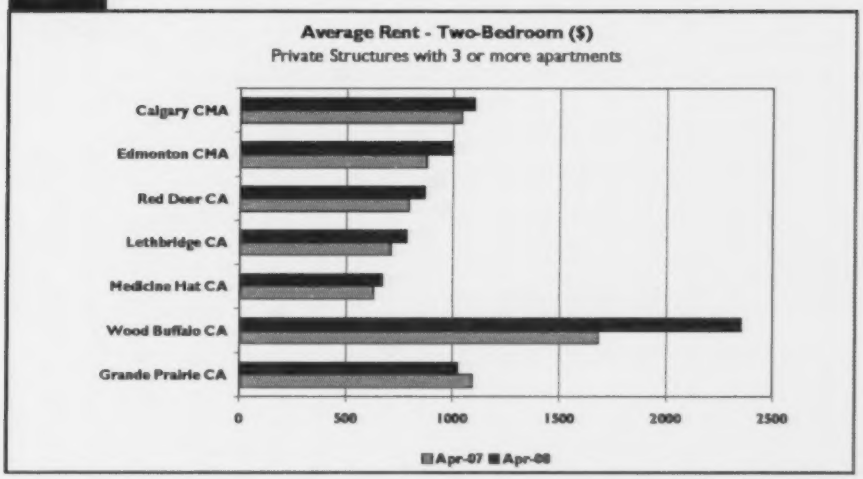
Figure 2



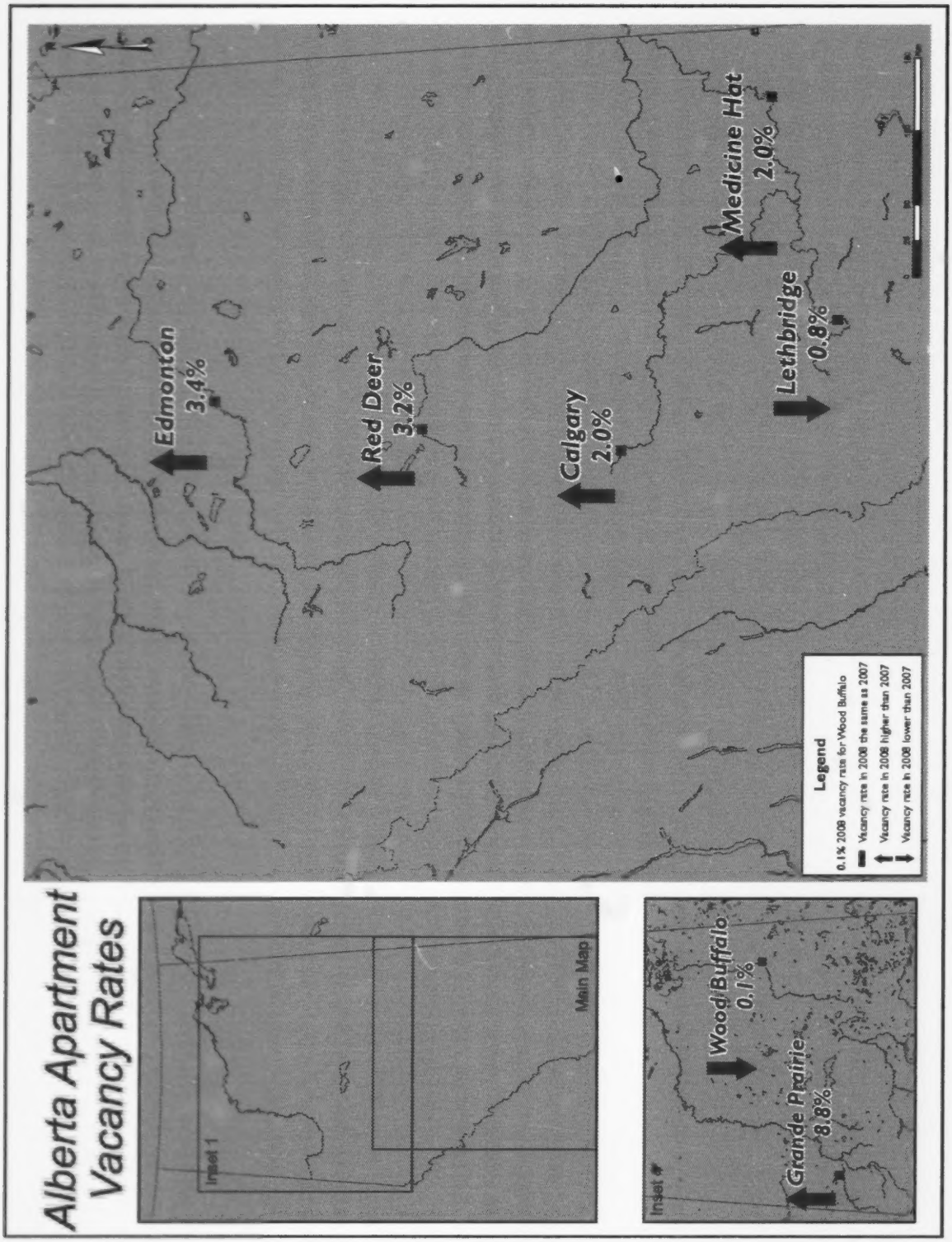
per cent in April 2008. The vacancy rate in Calgary increased from 0.5 per cent to 2.0 per cent over the same period. A number of factors contributed to the rise in vacancies in both markets. First, both centres are seeing diminished gains from migration due to improved economic conditions in Saskatchewan and British Columbia. Secondly, rapidly rising rents over the past two years have encouraged some renter households to double up. Purpose built rental has also faced competition from the condominium apartment and the secondary rental market. During the same time, a number of renter households have vacated their rental units in favour of home ownership.

Despite rising vacancies, the average rent for a two-bedroom increased from $877 in April 2007 to $1,000 in April 2008 in the Edmonton CMA. The average rent for a two-bedroom unit in the Calgary CMA increased from $1,037 to $1,096 during the 12-month period ending in April.

Amongst the five largest CAs, Wood Buffalo had the lowest vacancy rate at 0.1 per cent, and the highest two-bedroom average rent at $2,350. High levels of investment in oil sands continue to attract workers to Fort McMurray and surrounding communities. The vacancy rate in the Lethbridge CA declined from 1.3 per cent to 0.8 per cent as some rental units were converted to condominium tenure. The average monthly rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Lethbridge in April 2008 was $783 compared to $708 a year earlier.

Meanwhile, the curtailment of natural gas drilling activity and lower gains from migration pushed up the vacancy rate in Grande Prairie, Medicine Hat, and Red Deer between the two April surveys. The increases in Medicine Hat and Red Deer were relatively contained at 0.3 and 1.1 percentage points, respectively. In Grande Prairie, however, the vacancy rate experienced a more dramatic rise from 0.9 per cent in April 2007 to 8.8 per cent in April 2008. The impact of lower drilling for natural gas has been more pronounced in Grande Prairie than in other centres across the province. There is also a record level of inventory in the new and resale markets in the centre, thus providing homeownership opportunities for renter households.

As a result of higher vacancies, the average monthly rent for two-bedroom units in Grande Prairie declined from $1,094 units in April 2007 to $1,025 in April 2008. In spite of higher vacancies, the average monthly rent for two-bedroom units in Medicine Hat increased by $40 to $670 and by $74 in Red Deer to $866.


Alberta Apartment Vacancy Rates
Inset 1
Main Map
Inset 2
Wood Buffalo 0.1%
Grande Prairie 8.8%
Edmonton 3.4%
Red Deer 3.2%
Calgary 2.0%
Medicine Hat 2.0%
Lethbridge 0.8%
Legend
0.1% 2008 vacancy rate for Wood Buffalo
Vacancy rate in 2008 the same as 2007
Vacancy rate in 2008 higher than 2007
Vacancy rate in 2008 lower than 2007

1.1.1 Private Apartment Vacancy Rates (%) by Bedroom Type Alberta

Centre	Bachelor		1 Bedroom		2 Bedroom		3 Bedroom +		Total	
	Apr-07	Apr-08	Apr-07	Apr-08	Apr-07	Apr-08	Apr-07	Apr-08	Apr-07	Apr-08
Calgary CMA	0.1 b	2.6 c	0.5 a	1.8 b	0.6 a	2.2 b	0.1 b	**	0.5 a	2.0 a
Edmonton CMA	3.6 b	3.1 d	1.2 a	2.9 a	0.6 a	3.1 c	0.3 a	8.3 c	1.1 a	3.4 b
Brooks CA	**	0.0 a	3.8 c	4.0 c	1.9 a	3.8 c	4.5 d	0.0 c	2.4 a	3.6 c
Camrose CA	**	0.0 a	1.9 a	4.2 b	0.2 a	2.0 a	9.1 a	0.0 a	0.9 a	2.7 a
Canmore CA	**	**	0.0 a	0.0 a	0.0 a	0.0 a	0.0 a	0.0 a	0.0 a	0.0 a
Cold Lake CA	0.0 a	**	0.0 a	0.8 a	0.3 a	0.8 a	0.0 a	0.0 a	0.2 a	0.7 a
Grande Prairie CA	5.8 c	10.9 a	1.3 a	11.0 a	0.4 a	6.7 a	0.0 c	15.6 a	0.9 a	8.8 a
High River T	n/u	n/u	n/u	3.1 a	n/u	0.8 a	n/u	0.0 a	n/u	1.5 a
Lacombe T	n/u	**	n/u	0.0 a	n/u	1.8 a	n/u	0.0 a	n/u	1.2 a
Lethbridge CA	2.7 a	0.0 b	1.9 a	1.8 b	0.9 a	0.4 a	0.0 a	0.0 a	1.3 a	0.8 a
Medicine Hat CA	0.0 a	0.0 c	2.2 a	1.6 a	1.2 a	2.1 a	5.2 a	3.5 b	1.7 a	2.0 a
Okotoks CA	**	**	**	**	**	**	0.0 a	0.0 a	0.0 a	0.0 a
Red Deer CA	2.5 c	5.3 b	2.0 b	3.0 a	2.0 b	3.2 b	5.4 d	2.9 c	2.1 a	3.2 a
Strathmore T	n/u	**	n/u	0.0 a	n/u	0.8 a	n/u	2.7 a	n/u	1.0 a
Sylvan Lake T	n/u	**	n/u	0.0 a	n/u	2.1 a	n/u	**	n/u	1.5 a
Wetaskiwin CA	**	**	0.0 a	1.4 a	0.0 a	0.4 a	0.0 a	**	0.0 a	0.7 a
Wood Buffalo CA	2.4 a	0.0 a	0.1 a	0.2 a	0.2 a	0.1 a	0.5 a	0.0 a	0.2 a	0.1 a
Alberta 10,000+	**2.9 a**	**3.1 c**	**1.0 a**	**2.6 a**	**0.7 a**	**2.7 a**	**0.5 a**	**6.1 b**	**0.9 a**	**2.9 a**

The following letter codes are used to indicate the reliability of the estimates:
a – Excellent, b – Very good, c – Good, d – Fair (Use with Caution)
** Data suppressed to protect confidentiality or data is not statistically reliable
n/u: No units exist in universe for this category **n/s:** No units exist in the sample for this category **n/a:** Not applicable

Please click **Methodology** or **Data Reliability Tables Appendix links** for more details

1.1.2 Private Apartment Average Rents ($)
by Bedroom Type
Alberta

Centre	Bachelor		1 Bedroom		2 Bedroom		3 Bedroom +		Total	
	Apr-07	Apr-08	Apr-07	Apr-08	Apr-07	Apr-08	Apr-07	Apr-08	Apr-07	Apr-08
Calgary CMA	608 b	658 c	849 a	919 a	1,037 a	1,096 a	968 c	1,031 b	925 a	992 a
Edmonton CMA	628 a	682 a	729 a	837 a	877 a	1,000 a	1,055 a	1,039 a	795 a	908 a
Brooks CA	**	515 a	647 a	661 a	726 a	774 a	705 a	783 a	707 a	754 a
Camrose CA	**	461 a	542 a	639 a	677 a	757 a	660 a	807 a	631 a	716 a
Canmore CA	**	**	747 a	786 a	897 a	920 a	1,021 a	1,058 a	854 a	885 a
Cold Lake CA	611 a	**	733 a	907 a	820 a	985 a	869 a	1,036 a	782 a	949 a
Grande Prairie CA	770 a	761 a	940 a	903 a	1,094 a	1,025 a	1,233 a	1,166 a	1,039 a	979 a
High River T	n/u	n/u	n/u	690 a	n/u	765 a	n/u	804 a	n/u	745 a
Lacombe T	n/u	**	n/u	603 a	n/u	708 a	n/u	723 a	n/u	679 a
Lethbridge CA	487 a	514 a	620 a	690 a	708 a	783 a	781 a	827 a	672 a	740 a
Medicine Hat CA	484 a	523 b	531 a	560 a	630 a	670 a	709 a	766 a	596 a	634 a
Okotoks CA	**	n/s	**	**	**	**	893 a	**	792 b	835 c
Red Deer CA	550 a	570 a	665 a	723 a	792 a	866 a	906 b	1,013 a	734 a	798 a
Strathmore T	n/u	**	n/u	751 a	n/u	847 a	n/u	970 a	n/u	850 a
Sylvan Lake T	n/u	**	n/u	600 a	n/u	797 b	n/u	**	n/u	757 b
Wetaskiwin CA	**	**	530 a	615 a	621 a	738 a	**	**	594 a	698 a
Wood Buffalo CA	1,159 a	1,406 a	1,439 a	1,858 a	1,681 a	2,350 a	1,838 a	2,536 a	1,607 a	2,193 a
Alberta 10,000+	**622 a**	**673 a**	**774 a**	**873 a**	**932 a**	**1,049 a**	**1,034 a**	**1,072 a**	**847 a**	**953 a**

The following letter codes are used to indicate the reliability of the estimates (cv = coefficient of variation):

a – Excellent ($0 \leq cv \leq 2.5$), b – Very good ($2.5 < cv \leq 5$), c – Good ($5 < cv \leq 7.5$)

d – Fair (Use with Caution) ($7.5 < cv \leq 10$)

** Data suppressed to protect confidentiality or data is not statistically reliable

n/u: No units exist in universe for this category **n/s:** No units exist in the sample for this category **n/a:** Not applicable

Please click **Methodology** or **Data Reliability Tables Appendix links** for more details

1.1.3 Number of Private Apartment Units Vacant and Universe in April 2008 by Bedroom Type
Alberta

Centre	Bachelor		1 Bedroom		2 Bedroom		3 Bedroom +		Total	
	Vacant	Total	Vacant	Total	Vacant	Total	Vacant	Total	Vacant	Total
Calgary CMA	41 c	1,587	327 b	18,273	362 b	16,216	**	1,785	763 a	37,861
Edmonton CMA	131 d	4,228	781 a	26,975	776 c	24,783	361 c	4,374	2,050 b	60,360
Brooks CA	0 a	5	5 c	132	19 c	493	0 c	39	24 c	669
Camrose CA	0 a	7	13 b	322	12 a	618	0 a	23	26 a	970
Canmore CA	**	**	0 a	26	0 a	44	0 a	8	0 a	80
Cold Lake CA	**	**	1 a	127	1 a	131	0 a	23	2 a	286
Grande Prairie CA	13 a	119	103 a	933	111 a	1,656	24 a	154	251 a	2,862
High River T	n/u	n/u	2 a	64	1 a	121	0 a	20	3 a	205
Lacombe T	**	**	0 a	69	3 a	170	0 a	11	3 a	255
Lethbridge CA	0 b	147	15 b	870	6 a	1,586	0 a	89	22 a	2,692
Medicine Hat CA	0 c	51	13 a	818	32 a	1,482	4 b	116	49 a	2,467
Okotoks CA	**	**	**	**	**	**	0 a	16	0 a	94
Red Deer CA	14 b	259	53 a	1,782	81 b	2,496	3 c	117	151 a	4,654
Strathmore T	**	**	0 a	31	1 a	128	1 a	37	2 a	201
Sylvan Lake T	**	**	0 a	27	2 a	96	**	**	2 a	136
Wetaskiwin CA	**	**	3 a	214	2 a	472	**	**	5 a	701
Wood Buffalo CA	0 a	43	2 a	960	2 a	2,059	0 a	198	4 a	3,260
Alberta 10,000+	**199 c**	**6,470**	**1,320 a**	**51,634**	**1,411 a**	**52,618**	**428 b**	**7,032**	**3,358 a**	**117,753**

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1.1.4 Private Apartment Availability Rates (%) by Bedroom Type Alberta

Centre	Bachelor		1 Bedroom		2 Bedroom		3 Bedroom +		Total	
	Apr-07	Apr-08	Apr-07	Apr-08	Apr-07	Apr-08	Apr-07	Apr-08	Apr-07	Apr-08
Calgary CMA	**	4.1 c	2.2 b	3.9 b	1.4 a	4.4 c	**	**	1.8 b	4.0 b
Edmonton CMA	4.0 b	4.4 d	1.6 a	3.9 b	1.9 a	4.1 c	0.7 a	9.2 b	1.8 a	4.4 b
Brooks CA	**	0.0 a	3.8 c	8.2 b	2.1 a	4.9 b	4.5 d	**	2.6 a	5.4 b
Camrose CA	**	0.0 a	1.9 a	4.8 a	0.8 a	2.7 a	9.1 a	0.0 a	1.3 a	3.3 a
Canmore CA	**	**	0.0 a	0.0 a	0.0 a	2.3 a	0.0 a	0.0 a	0.0 a	1.3 a
Cold Lake CA	3.4 a	**	2.8 a	3.9 a	4.8 a	3.1 a	8.3 a	0.0 a	4.2 a	3.1 a
Grande Prairie CA	10.8 d	15.1 a	3.2 b	14.5 a	1.2 a	9.2 a	0.0 c	16.2 a	2.2 a	11.5 a
High River T	n/u	n/u	n/u	7.8 a	n/u	1.7 a	n/u	0.0 a	n/u	3.4 a
Lacombe T	n/u	**	n/u	0.0 a	n/u	1.8 a	n/u	0.0 a	n/u	1.2 a
Lethbridge CA	3.4 a	0.7 a	4.7 a	4.8 b	5.6 a	4.5 b	0.9 a	2.4 a	5.0 a	4.4 a
Medicine Hat CA	5.6 a	0.0 c	3.6 a	4.1 a	3.3 a	4.6 a	7.8 a	6.2 b	3.7 a	4.4 a
Okotoks CA	**	**	**	**	**	**	0.0 a	0.0 a	0.0 a	0.0 a
Red Deer CA	5.0 c	5.7 b	3.5 c	4.3 a	3.4 b	5.0 a	**	3.9 d	3.7 b	4.7 a
Strathmore T	n/u	**	n/u	3.2 a	n/u	2.3 a	n/u	2.7 a	n/u	2.5 a
Sylvan Lake T	n/u	**	n/u	0.0 a	n/u	3.1 a	n/u	**	n/u	2.2 a
Wetaskiwin CA	**	**	0.4 a	1.4 a	0.0 a	0.8 a	0.0 a	**	0.1 a	1.0 a
Wood Buffalo CA	2.4 a	0.0 a	0.4 a	0.3 a	0.4 a	0.1 a	1.0 a	0.0 a	0.5 a	0.2 a
Alberta 10,000+	**3.7 b**	**4.4 c**	**2.0 a**	**4.0 a**	**1.9 a**	**4.2 b**	**1.5 d**	**7.1 b**	**2.0 a**	**4.3 a**

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1.1.5 Private Apartment Estimate of Percentage Change (%) of Average Rent [1] by Bedroom Type
Alberta

Centre	Bachelor		1 Bedroom		2 Bedroom		3 Bedroom +		Total	
	Apr-06 to Apr-07	Apr-07 to Apr-08	Apr-06 to Apr-07	Apr-07 to Apr-08	Apr-06 to Apr-07	Apr-07 to Apr-08	Apr-06 to Apr-07	Apr-07 to Apr-08	Apr-06 to Apr-07	Apr-07 to Apr-08
Calgary CMA	n/a	**	n/a	6.1 c	n/a	6.0 c	n/a	**	n/a	6.3 c
Edmonton CMA	n/a	12.9 c	n/a	11.4 a	n/a	13.7 a	n/a	12.4 d	n/a	12.2 a
Brooks CA	n/a	**	n/a	5.3 b	n/a	6.3 a	n/a	**	n/a	6.6 a
Camrose CA	n/a	4.9 a	n/a	15.3 a	n/a	17.0 a	n/a	20.4 a	n/a	16.0 a
Canmore CA	n/a	**	n/a	11.5 a	n/a	5.1 a	n/a	6.7 a	n/a	6.4 a
Cold Lake CA	n/a	**	n/a	18.6 a	n/a	14.9 a	n/a	13.0 a	n/a	17.0 a
Grande Prairie CA	n/a	-1.3 a	n/a	++	n/a	**	n/a	++	n/a	**
High River T	n/a	n/u	n/a	n/u	n/a	n/u	n/a	n/u	n/a	n/u
Lacombe T	n/a	n/u	n/a	n/u	n/a	n/u	n/a	n/u	n/a	n/u
Lethbridge CA	n/a	6.3 b	n/a	11.9 a	n/a	11.6 a	n/a	3.7 a	n/a	11.2 a
Medicine Hat CA	n/a	8.0 b	n/a	6.5 a	n/a	6.4 a	n/a	8.6 a	n/a	6.3 a
Okotoks CA	n/a	**	n/a	**	n/a	**	n/a	**	n/a	**
Red Deer CA	n/a	6.7 b	n/a	5.6 b	n/a	5.2 b	n/a	7.1 b	n/a	5.2 a
Strathmore T	n/a	n/u	n/a	n/u	n/a	n/u	n/a	n/u	n/a	n/u
Sylvan Lake T	n/a	n/u	n/a	n/u	n/a	n/u	n/a	n/u	n/a	n/u
Wetaskiwin CA	n/a	**	n/a	14.1 a	n/a	14.6 a	n/a	**	n/a	14.3 a
Wood Buffalo CA	n/a	23.9 a	n/a	27.6 a	n/a	30.7 a	n/a	25.5 a	n/a	29.4 a
Alberta 10,000+	**n/a**	**12.4 c**	**n/a**	**9.4 a**	**n/a**	**10.6 a**	**n/a**	**12.1 c**	**n/a**	**9.9 a**

[1] The Estimate of Percentage Change is a measure of the market movement, and is based on thoses structures that were common to the survey for both years.

The following letter codes are used to indicate the reliability of the estimates:
a – Excellent, b – Very good, c – Good, d – Fair (Use with Caution)
** Data suppressed to protect confidentiality or data is not statistically reliable
++ change in rent is not statistically significant. This means that the change in rent is not statistically different than zero (0)
n/u: No units exist in universe for this category **n/s:** No units exist in the sample for this category **n/a:** Not applicable

Please click **Methodology** or **Data Reliability Tables Appendix links** for more details

METHODOLOGY FOR RENTAL MARKET SURVEY

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) conducts the **Rental Market Survey** (RMS) every year in April and October to estimate the relative strengths in the rental market. The survey is conducted on a sample basis in all urban areas with populations of 10,000 and more. The survey targets only privately initiated structures with at least three rental units, which have been on the market for at least three months. The data collected for a structure depends on whether it is an apartment or a row structure. The survey collects market rent, available and vacant unit data for all sampled structures. Most RMS data contained in this publication refer to privately initiated apartment structures.

The survey is conducted by a combination of telephone interviews and site visits, and information is obtained from the owner, manager, or building superintendent. The survey is conducted during the first two weeks of April/October, and the results reflect market conditions at that time.

CMHC's Rental Market Survey provides a snapshot of vacancy and availability rates, and average rents in both new and existing structures. There also exists a measure for the change in rent that is calculated based on existing structures only. The estimate is based on structures that were common to the survey sample for both the April 2007 and April 2008 Rental Market Surveys. The change in rent in existing structures is an estimate of the change in rent that the landlords charge and removes compositional effects on the rent level movement due to new buildings, conversions, and survey sample rotation. The estimate of per cent change in rent is available in all Canada and Provincial Highlights publications, and also in the CMA reports (fall survey only). The rent levels in new and existing structures are also published. While the per cent change in rents in existing structures published in the reports are statistically significant, changes in rents that one might calculate based on rent levels in new and existing structures may or may not be statistically significant.

DEFINITIONS

Availability: A rental unit is considered available if the existing tenant has given, or has received, notice to move, and a new tenant has not signed a lease; or the unit is vacant (see definition of vacancy below).

Rent: The rent refers to the actual amount tenants pay for their unit. No adjustments are made for the inclusion or exclusion of amenities and services such as heat, hydro, parking, and hot water. For available and vacant units, the rent is the amount the owner is asking for the unit.

It should be noted that the average rents reported in this publication provide a sound indication of the amounts paid by unit size and geographical sector. Utilities such as heating, electricity and hot water may or may not be included in the rent.

Rental Apartment Structure: Any building containing three or more rental units, of which at least one unit is not ground oriented. Owner-occupied units are not included in the rental building unit count.

Rental Row (Townhouse) Structure: Any building containing three or more rental units, all of which are ground oriented with vertical divisions. Owner-occupied units are not included in the rental building unit count. These row units in some centres are commonly referred to as townhouses.

Vacancy: A unit is considered vacant if, at the time of the survey, it is physically unoccupied and available for immediate rental.

Definitions of Census Areas referred to in this publication are as follows:

A census metropolitan area (CMA) or a census agglomeration (CA) is formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a large urban area (known as the urban core). The census population count of the urban core is at least 10,000 to form a census agglomeration and at least 100,000 to form a census metropolitan area. To be included in the CMA or CA, other adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the central urban area, as measured by commuting flows derived from census place of work data. CMAs and CAs contain whole municipalities or Census Subdivisions.

All data presented in this publication is based on Statistics Canada's 2006 Census area definitions.

Acknowledgement

The Rental Market Survey could not have been conducted without the cooperation of the rental property owners, managers, and building superintendents throughout Canada. CMHC acknowledges their hard work and assistance in providing timely and accurate information. As a result of their contribution, CMHC is able to provide information that benefits the entire housing industry.

CMHC—HOME TO CANADIANS

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) has been Canada's national housing agency for more than 60 years.

Together with other housing stakeholders, we help ensure that the Canadian housing system remains one of the best in the world. We are committed to helping Canadians access a wide choice of quality, environmentally sustainable and affordable homes – homes that will continue to create vibrant and healthy communities and cities across the country.

For more information, visit our website at www.cmhc.ca

You can also reach us by phone at 1-800-668-2642 or by fax at 1-800-245-9274.
Outside Canada call 613-748-2003 or fax to 613-748-2016.

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29/05/2007

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